

What is Fasting?

Adapted from the workbook "How To Reach Your City" by Janet Broling
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"Do I pray the whole time I am fasting?"

Jesus' words in Matthew 6:17-19 tell us to groom ourselves so that we appear not to be fasting to men but only to God. This implies that life goes on during fasting.

"What happens when I fast?"

- ❖ I am refraining from food for my sustenance and turning to the Lord for sustenance.
- ❖ I am displaying a sign of humility. My actions imply dependence upon God rather than upon myself for His answer to my situation.
- ❖ I am presenting a heart of repentance to my Lord and am displaying a desire to turn from sin. Therefore, God is free to work.
- ❖ I am seeking an uninterrupted state of communion with my Lord.
- ❖ I am asking my Lord to do what I cannot do.
- ❖ I am expecting Him to do what I cannot do.
- ❖ My faith is strengthened through this period of fasting.
- ❖ Fasting deepens my intimacy with Jesus.
- ❖ True fasting brings intervention from God (Isaiah 58:3-9; Matthew 6:16-18)

"How do I fast?"

- ❖ Ask the Lord for the desire and ability to fast.
- ❖ Ask the Lord for sustenance any time hunger or weakness arises (Go pray at this time – it is a reminder to pray).
- ❖ Refrain from solid food during the time of fasting.
- ❖ Drink liquids. Recommendations – water with lemon juice.
- ❖ Use caffeine sparingly.
- ❖ If doctor's approval, which is always recommended, or health prevents fasting from food, fast from something you enjoy.
- ❖ Be discreet when fasting; do not bring attention to yourself (Matthew 6:16-18).

"Will God always answer my requests if I fast?"

Fasting should not become a manipulative ploy. It brings us no closer to the Lord if our hearts are not right with Him. Fasting is a means by which I hear my Lord's will; and it is a channel whereby I allow my Father to line up my desires with those of Christ, as I am learning to trust in His omniscience.(Romans 8: 26-17). Fasting does not always produce the answer I expected or necessarily wanted, but it enables me to live victoriously in that situation. That was King David's experience in In 2 Samuel 12:22-23.

"I do not think I can fast!"

If you have never fasted or feel this way, don't worry – you are not alone. Suggestion: The day before you fast, tell Christ how you feel, ask Him to empower you, and to remind you when you awaken of your fasting schedule. Anytime you feel weary, go to Him and ask for sustenance. If you have severe reactions, stop your fast. The Lord knows even the number of hairs of our head and understands. He hears and answers because He knows each heart's desires.